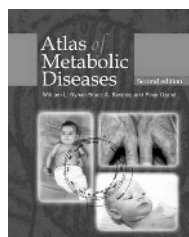


BOOK REVIEWS

Atlas of metabolic diseases, 2nd edition

Edited by William N Nyhan, Bruce A Barshop, Pinar T Özand. London: Hodder Arnold, 2005, £150.00 (US\$260 (approx.); €221 (approx.)) (hardback), pp 788. ISBN 0 340 80970 1



Considering myself very much a "general paediatrician" with no special interest in metabolic medicine, it was with some trepidation that I embarked on reviewing this tome of a book. However, once I had overcome this fear I was pleasantly surprised by the ease with which I accessed the text and excited by the knowledge I was able to gain.

In the preface, it is suggested by one of the authors, William Nyhan, that the book should be used to "dip into" when faced with diagnosing and managing patients with inherited diseases of metabolism. Many large books of this sort are not always easy to "dip into" as readers get lost in the endless text and tables. This book, however, lends itself to being read in this way. Each chapter deals with a different inherited metabolic disorder. The chapters are divided into "Introduction", "Clinical abnormalities", "Genetics and pathogenesis", and "Treatment". What readers might find particularly appealing and useful for quick reference, is the box at the beginning of each chapter labelled "Major phenotypic expression". This highlighted box lists all the features that the metabolic disease may present with, hence allowing the reader to pursue the chapter further or move on to the next one.

The introduction of each chapter includes a diagram of the metabolic pathway involved in the inherited disease being discussed. Although I usually find such diagrams off-putting, in this context they were particularly useful and explained fully by the accompanying text.

Clearly the most impressive aspect of this textbook are the photographic illustrations. Each chapter is illustrated by up-to-date

photographs of children and adults with the various inherited diseases. There are also pictures of radiological and histological investigations. Each illustration is accompanied by explanatory text. I found I was intrigued by the photographs and they certainly compelled me to want to read more about the clinical condition.

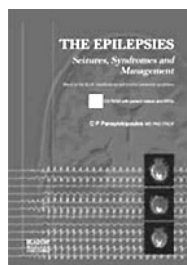
Another particularly useful aspect of this book is the appendix which lists the "Differential diagnosis of clinical phenotypes". The clinical phenotypes are listed alphabetically in bold, highlighted text and the differential diagnoses listed below. There is also an appendix which lists the clinical phenotype and then tells you the page on which it appears; again very useful for quick reference.

This is a book which should be on all paediatric wards, neonatal units, and outpatient departments. It is not a book which should be read from cover-to-cover (although the authors do suggest this could be done if studying for examinations). Instead, in my opinion, it is an excellent resource for reference; a book to be leafed through when faced with a diagnostic dilemma. And once a diagnosis has been made, this book provides excellent management and treatment plans as guidance for dealing with often complicated and rare diseases.

K Malbon

The epilepsies: seizures, syndromes and management based on the ILAE classifications and practice parameter guidelines

Edited by C P Panayiotopoulos. Oxfordshire: Bladon Medical Publishing, 2005, £95.00 (US\$163 (approx.); €139 (approx.)), pp 541. ISBN 1904218342



Having accepted to review this text over the summer months, I was surprised by the scope and indeed extent of this edition. I had wrongly assumed that this was to be a second edition of the author's previously reviewed¹ and more concise text,

A clinical guide to epileptic syndromes and their treatment (based on the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) diagnostic system), but this text is quite encyclopaedic and with a broader remit. It does indeed "do what it says on the tin", covering recent advances in epileptic seizures, syndromes, and management and is usefully based on the ILAE classification, practice parameters, and guidelines. Clearly not typical bedtime reading, I elected to refer to it in day to day practice as a clinician running my own seizure clinic and found it useful and informative. The text is well laid out with examples of EEG abnormalities clearly and insightfully illustrated using accompanying case histories. Considering this is a single author text, the references (nearly 2500 of them!) are clear, extensive, up to date, and relevant. Each epileptic syndrome is placed in the context of the ILAE taxonomy, its demography, clinical manifestations including differential diagnosis, aetiology, diagnostic procedures, prognosis, and management, as well as useful practical tips and anecdotes. The final chapter provides a useful and practical pharmacopoeia of antiepileptic drugs. I was pleased and reassured to find general consistency with the text and recently published national guidelines on both sides of the border! (Diagnosis and management of epilepsies in children and young people, SIGN, 2005; The epilepsies: the diagnosis and management of the epilepsies in adults and children in primary and secondary care, NICE, 2004). The book comes accompanied by a CD-ROM showing various fits, faints, and funny turns with split screen video EEG interpretation which students and trainees will find particularly useful in areas where there are still diagnostic and classification uncertainties. Minor grumbles are a perhaps not too surprising fascination with early onset benign childhood occipital epilepsy (aka Panayiotopoulos syndrome)—perhaps the author feels that having been ignored or unrecognised previously this may be justified, and small but frequent syntax errors that might have been picked up at proofing. If as the author suggests this might be a reference source for neurologists, clinical neurophysiologists, and epileptologists, it will also be of service to any clinician managing children and adults with epileptic disorders. As such it should find a place on the bookshelf of any or all of these departments.

D F Macgregor

Reference

- 1 McShane T. Book review. *Arch Dis Child* 2004;**89**:591.

Pre-published book reviews

Book reviews that have been accepted for publication but have not yet been published in the print journal can be viewed online at <http://adc.bmjjournals.com/misc/bookreviews.shtml>